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Sport for development and peace

Social development: social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Promotion and protection of human rights: implementation of human rights instruments

Letter dated 5 October 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement by the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation concerning the non-politicization of sport (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this statement circulated as a document of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly under agenda items 11, 26 (a) and 68 (a).

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(*Signed*) V. **Churkin**

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Annex to the letter dated 5 October 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation concerning the non-politicization of sport

The Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation is deeply dismayed by the decision of the International Paralympic Committee of 7 August 2016 to suspend the Russian Paralympic Committee's membership of this organization, resulting in the exclusion of the Russian Paralympic team from the XV Paralympic Summer Games (2016) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This unprecedented discriminatory act has severely damaged the reputation of the Paralympic Movement and has gravely violated the rights of persons with disabilities, who give inspiration and hope to millions through sporting accomplishments that demonstrate the triumph of the human spirit and human will.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 13 December 2006 defines non-discrimination and equality of opportunity as fundamental principles, and it also requires States to enable persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in sporting activities. However, without direct evidence of their guilt, 266 athletes with disabilities from Russia were deprived of the right to participate in the XV Paralympic Summer Games (2016) in Rio de Janeiro, possibly the main event of their lives. This violated not only the rights of Russian Paralympic athletes. Ultimately all of the participants in the Games were deprived of the opportunity for fair competition in the absence of one of the strongest teams. Russian athletes convincingly confirmed their high level of sports training in open all-Russia sporting competitions involving sports included in the programme of the Paralympic Summer Games, with 22 results beating world records.

The Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation also expresses grave concern at the discriminatory decision adopted by the International Association of Athletics Federations against the Russian team, as a result of which Russian athletes were not allowed to participate in the Games of the XXXI Olympiad (2016) in Rio de Janeiro. The disqualification unfairly affected even those Russian athletes who had never been suspected of doping and who had passed multiple tests confirming the absence of prohibited substances.

In accordance with the Olympic Charter of the International Olympic Committee, any form of discrimination against a country or a person for racial, religious, political or other reasons, or on the grounds of gender, is incompatible with membership of the Olympic Movement.

The Russian Federation has ratified the International Convention against Doping in Sport, adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 19 October 2005 in Paris, and fully complies with the obligations assumed under the Convention. The rules of fair play should be applied not only in sport, but also by international sports organizations to national sports associations and teams: there should be no presumption of guilt or special relationship with certain countries, even if

that is being actively called for by powerful politicians and the media. Sport should be free from politics and impervious to any external pressure.

The Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation believes that a dangerous precedent has been set that must be remedied as soon as possible. In order to overcome the crisis, clear conditions must be established for restoring the Russian Paralympic Committee's membership of the International Paralympic Committee and for Russian Paralympic athletes to participate in international competitions under its auspices.

Given the need to restore the membership of the All-Russia Athletics Federation within the International Association of Athletics Federation, and in support of the measures taken by the Russian Federation to combat the use of prohibited substances and methods in sport, the Chamber maintains a principled approach of condemning discriminatory measures against Russian athletes. There is no place in sport for politicized and selective treatment. The practice of public authorities, politicians and the media putting pressure on sports organizations should be strongly condemned and stopped.

The Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, in adopting this statement, considers it necessary to draw the attention of parliaments of foreign States to violations of the rights of athletes in sport, with a view to the subsequent discussion of this situation in interparliamentary organizations.

It would also appear necessary, in the field of Olympism and Paralympism, for the United Nations Human Rights Council to hold a discussion on compliance with the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, General Assembly resolution 69/6 "Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace" dated 31 October 2014 and General Assembly resolution 70/4 "Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal" dated 26 October 2015.